

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 21138 221455Z
ACTION SS-25

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O R 211136Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 21138

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT PARA 4)

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS CD US FR
SUBJECT: MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO CHAD

REF: (A) PARIS 20977, (B) STATE 167607

1. SUMMARY: WHILE RULING OUT A MEETING OF FRIENDS OF
CHAD, ELYSEE AFRICAN AFFAIRS ADVISOR JOURNIAC WELCOMED
BILATERAL COORDINATION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE. HE
SUGGESTED THAT THE US MIGHT PROVIDE SMALL TRANSPORT
PLANES, HELICOPTERS, SMALL ARMS FOR 1500 MEN, A FEW
LIGHT ARMORED VEHICLES, AND INCREASED ECONOMIC
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ASSISTANCE. THE FRENCH ARE ANXIOUS TO PREVENT ANOTHER
MILITARY DEFEAT FOR THE WEAKENED MALLOUM REGIME. THEY
BELIEVE THAT QADHAFI IS SUSCEPTIBLE TO DIPLOMATIC
PRESSURE AND THAT CONVENING THE OAU COMMITTEE ON CHAD
WOULD BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS TO APPLY IT. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF FOLLOWED UP AMBASSADOR'S PRESENTATION TO

LABOULAYE (REF A) WITH SIMILAR EXPOSITION ON JULY 20 TO GISCARD'S AFRICAN AFFAIRS ADVISOR, RENE JOURNIAC. THE LATTER HAD NOT YET HEARD OF OUR DEMARCHE TO THE QUAI, BUT HIS REACTION WAS LIKE LABOULAYE'S THOUGH STRONGER, JOURNIAC SAID THAT THE FRANCH GENERALLY ARE OPPOSED IN PRINCIPLE TO "CONCERTATION" ON AFRICAN MATTERS. MEETINGS TO CONCERT POLICY BECOME KNOWN AND ARE INVARIABLY MISUNDERSTOOD BY THE AFRICANS WHO VIEW THEM AS A VEILED WAY FOR THE INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES TO GANG UP ON THEM. THUS JOURNIAC RULED OUT ANY MEETING BUT HASTENED TO SAY THAT THE FRENCH WOULD VERY MUCH APPROVE BILATERAL CONCERTING OF POLICY ON CHAD.

3. JOURNIAC INDICATED THAT THE FRENCH HAVE ACCELERATED DELIVERY OF LIGHT ARMORED VEHICLES ALREADY ON ORDER AND REPLACED SOME OF CHAD'S WORN OUT GAZELLE HELICOPTERS. CHAD'S GREATEST MILITARY NEED IS FOR AIR TRANSPORT TO CARRY MEN, MATERIEL AND FUEL TO WIDELY SPACED BASES. A PLANE LIKE THE AD-4 IS IDEAL, BUT THE FRENCH DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH AVAILABLE TO MEET CHAD'S NEEDS. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE US MIGHT HELP OUT WITH SMALL TRANSPORT PLANES AND PERHAPS ADDITIONAL HELICOPTERS. PILOTS COULD BE RECRUITED UNDER CHADIAN CONTRACT, HE ADDED.

4. IN ADDITION, HE SAID FRANCE WAS HAVING DIFFICULTIES
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MEETING THE REQUEST FOR ARMS FOR THE 1500 ADDITIONAL TROOPS CHAD IS RECRUITING. A FEW MORE LIGHT ARMORED VEHICLES ARE ALSO NEEDED. THE US MIGHT USEFULLY SUPPLY THESE ITEMS. FINALLY, JOURNIAC NOTED CHAD'S GREAT NEED FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. HE SAID THAT GREATER AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WOULD BE HELPFUL IN THE FIGHT AGAINST SUBVERSION.

5. AS FOR OTHER DONORS, JOURNIAC SAID THAT GABON HAD PROVIDED TWO COMBAT PLANES, EGYPT HAD SENT ABOUT 80 TONS OF MATERIEL, PRIMARILY MUNITIONS AND SPARE PARTS FOR SOVIET ARMORED VEHICLES IN CHAD'S INVENTORY AND FOR WHICH THE USSR HAD PROVIDED VERY LITTLE AMMUNITION.

6. AFTER COMMENTING THAT THE GREATEST DANGER FOR A MILITARY REGIME IS A MILITARY DEFEAT. JOURNIAC SAID THAT THE FALL OF BARDAI HAD BEEN A SEVERE BLOW FOR MALLOUM. THE FRENCH ARE ATTEMPTING TO PREVENT ANOTHER SUCH BLOW AND CONSIDER THAT LARGEAU MUST BE HELD AT ALL POST. THE GREAT PROBLEM IS THAT ONE NEVER KNOWS WHAT QADHAFI WILL DO. HE CONTINUES TO DENY ANY INVOLVEMENT. ON THE OTHER HAND, JOURNIAC CONTINUED, QADHAFI IS DIPLOMATICALLY

IN A BAD SITUATION AFTER THE LIBREVILLE SUMMIT. ALL
LIBYA'S NEIGHBORS EXCEPT ALGERIA ARE HOSTILE, AND
QADHAFI IS THUS SUSCEPTIBLE TO PRESSURE. HENCE THE
MAIN FRENCH DIPLOMATIC EFFORT WILL BE TO ENCOURAGE OAU
PRESIDENT BONGO TO CONVENE THE AD HOC COMMITTEE
ESTABLISHED AT LIBREVILLE TO STUDY AND REPORT ON THE
CHADIAN COMPLAINT. A MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE MIGHT
EASE THE WAY TO AN AFRICAN SOLUTION OF THE BORDER
DISPUTE, WHICH, IF ACHIEVED, WOULD LESSEN LIBYAN
INVOLVEMENT WITH THE CHADIAN REBELS. WHILE THE FRANCH
CONSIDER BONGO WELL-DISPOSED TO CALLING A MEETING ON
CHAD, THEY RECOGNIZE THAT HE WILL HESITATE TO DO SO
SINCE HE DOESN'T WANT QADHAFI ON HIS BACK AND KNOWS
THAT IT COULD CREAT PRESSURES FOR HIM TO CONVENE
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MEETINGS ON OTHER PROBLEMS. LIKE THE SAHARA. FOR WHICH
HE HAS LESS STOMACH. BUT WE WILL KEEP TRYING."
JOURNIC CONCLUDED.
HARTMAN

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